

Influenza Immunization Recommendations for Older Adults

People 65 years of age and older are at higher risk of complications of influenza due to reduced immune function, and they account for 50% to 70% of seasonal flu-related hospitalizations.

Recommendations:

- Influenza vaccination reduces pneumonia, hospitalization, and deaths in older adults and can reduce risk of COPD exacerbations.
- Influenza vaccination should be given by the end of October but can be given anytime throughout flu season.
- High-dose trivalent influenza vaccine is approved for people 65 and older and has been shown to be more effective at preventing influenza infection and some



complications compared to standard-dose trivalent vaccine.

The following vaccines are recommended for people 65 and older for prevention of influenza.

Note that the live, intranasal vaccine is not recommended in this population.

VACCINE	BRAND NAME(S)	DOSE	HOW IT IS GIVEN
Standard-dose TIV ¹	Influvac®, Fluviral, Agriflu®	0.5 mL	IM ³
High-dose TIV	Fluzone® High-Dose	0.5 mL	IM
MF59-adjuvanted TIV	Fluad®	0.5 mL	IM
QIV ²	Flulaval Tetra, Fluzone® Quadrivalent	0.5 mL	IM

¹TIV = trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (two influenza A types, and one influenza B type virus)

²QIV = quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (two influenza A types and two influenza B types)

³IM = intramuscular

Adverse Effects:

- Common reactions post injection (more frequent with adjuvanted vaccine) — redness, swelling, induration, and pain at the injection site that can last two to three days
- Systemic reactions can occur (may occur more frequently with adjuvanted vaccine and high-dose trivalent vaccine) — headache, malaise, myalgia, fatigue, arthralgia, and fever

Reference:

Government of Canada. Canadian Immunization Guide Chapter on Influenza and Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for 2018–2019. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-statement-seasonal-influenza-vaccine-2018-2019.html#2.3>. Accessed May 6, 2019.